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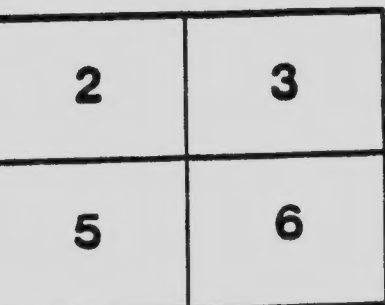
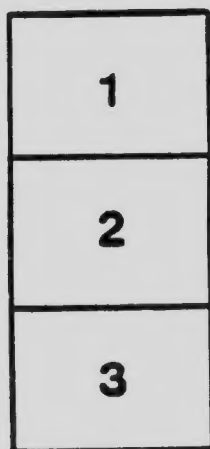
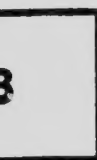
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From My Gallery

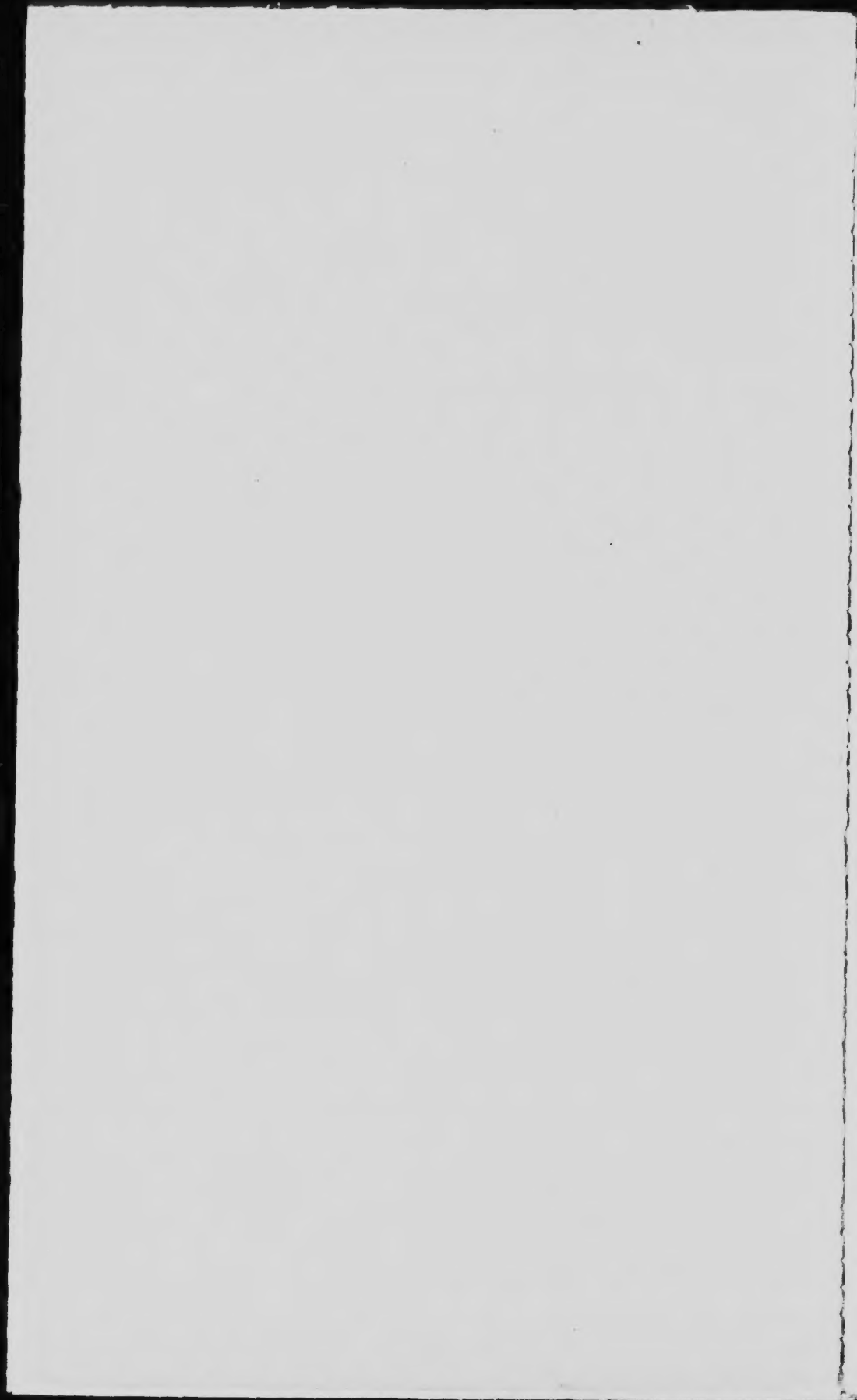
BY

S. W. DYDE,

Author of "War Verses"



FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION



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From My Gallery

SING ME TO SLEEP

Sing me to sleep, sing me to sleep,
O river of the by-gone years!
How softly still your waters creep,
And hum around my dreaming ears!

When twists of smoke from house-tops rise,
And o'er the grass the shadows creep,
Come, Rideau, close my weary eyes,
Sing me to sleep; sing me to sleep.

When in the thick of life's alarms
I back to childhood wistful creep,
Come Rideau, take in your arms,
Sing me to sleep; sing me to sleep.

GIFTS

Plod, plod, plod!
And day by weary day the load
Cuts deeper, and the hod
Grows heavier, while the spur and goad
Fail, and the heart turns to a clod,
And there seems to be no end to the road
Save underneath the sod.

Lift, lift, lift!
Yes: the road is steep;
Yes: dark is the drift;
But where the mist-mantle is deep,
Through its folds a glimmer will creep:
The dark is My gift;
So is the rift.

From My Gallery

LOVE

O what is Love? How may one tell?
And yet within its narrow girth,
Four letters, just one syllable,
Are hid high heaven and all earth.

O what is Love? A little word;
But he who can its message spell,
And has its deepest music heard,
Is standing on life's pinnacle.

O what is Love? A heart-disease,
Far better than untroubled health,
Sweet torments, too, and poverties,
Not to be bought by painless wealth.

Love? 'Tis an Open Sesame,
For him who has the gift of eyes,
To more than Spain or Araby,
Or any earthly paradise.

O what is Love? A leveler
Of ragged beggar-maid and king,
A free and lusty reveler,
Who spills his wine on everything.

Love? 'Tis a fairy in disguise,
A hunch-back'd wither'd crone, who can
With crooked stick immortalize
The so-called simple, common man.

Yes, love, it is a lunacy,
Some smoking brand it calls Orion,
An Ygdrasil is every tree,
And every bald old hill a Zion,

A thing discarded, vulgar, null,
A derelict without lateen,
A waif, a vagabond, a trull,
Who rises up to be a queen,

A lackey, bidden stand and wait
Without, while Commoner and Lord
The high affairs of church and state
Discuss around the council board;

From My Gallery

Then, when a deadlock, an impasse
They reach, and know not how or where
To find a way through thicket crass,
They place the lackey in the chair.

A VISION

Out of the grate behind the flame
Something appeared,
A shape it had not, nor yet name;
It crawled and leered.

Its eye transfixed me with its gleam:
"You empty sham!
Your lethargies, each squalid dream,
You inch, you dram,

Your cowardice I fully know
Your views flambuoyant;
You common man! You thing or so!
I am clairvoyant.

When have you said a simple word?
A rectitude
When have you done? When were you stirr'd
To fortitude?

Over your heart, over your mind,
Over your eyes,
Is writ in letters underlined
'Lies! Lies! Lies! Lies!'"

It ceased, the while its skin like lead
Shook as with chill;
I glanced at it; "'Tis true!" I said;
And then was still.

HOME FROM WAR

The chair he used, the plate, the spoon,
An empty place, unanswering walls,
A cast-off pair of overalls'
O that he may be back home soon!

The stars in flocks across the dome
Are shooting; 'tis their flaming eyes;
Singing they enter Paradise;
The boys, our boys are going home!

From My Gallery

***A PLEA FROM JOHNNY CANUCK**

I look far back to the sand-hills
On the banks of the Rideau stream,
A mile above where the slim sheet
Drops in a silver gleam,
Away to the brown Ottawa
Below the cauldron's steam;

And I remember the small boys,
Our comrades in the games,
Making bon-fires in the sand-heaps,
And dancing round the flames,
Or sliding down the ice-hill
Ba'tees and Pat and James.

And through the gold-crown'd summers
We grew up with Ba'tees,
Though I went to the Free Kirk
And he to the église,
And Pat away to St. Michael's
To drop upon his knees.

But no matter whence our forefathers,
From sunny France or Heather;
No matter what our family's flag,
The Cross or Prince's Feather;
We clasp each one the hand of the rest,
All Johnny Canucks together.

We love the old rose-garden
And the soft purple hill;
We love the pure white Fleur-de-lys
With a love beyond our will;
We love the harp of green Erin
Now so awfully still.

We plead with you, O dear Erin,
Your harp from the willows take;
Your tender haunting home-songs
Once more touch and awake;
And join with the rose and the thistle,
To heal the deep heart-ache.

*Written in December of the year 1920.

From My Gallery

THREE FRIENDS

One night our column near Cambrai
Was badly pilled; a sighting shell,
A fierce and savage vulture fell,
Stark on three comrades in the way.

We placed three crosses on the grave
One for our big and handsome Rod,
One for the soul of all his squad,
Our Pat, and one for Rufus brave.

A lump comes somewhere as I cast
My thought far back, and summon up
Pat, Rod and "Ruf," their noble pup,
That Cambrai night which was their last.

O yes beneath the Maple's sway
In some sore hearts the memory
Is green for Rod, the strong and free,
And happy Pat, killed near Cambrai;

Perchance, too, they recall the loss
Of that good pal, who used to leap
And bark, but now in slumber deep
Lies still beneath the middle cross.

"Ruf"—your paw!

Et c'est ça.

WAR-FLOTSAM

O yes, the mighty current with swift rush
Goes by, bearing upon its flood raft, boat,
And log, the while within a bay, afloat
In shallow, or aground amidst the brush,
Some timbers broken loose are lost. The crush
And roar of war like dying storm remote
Subside, while captured guns with empty throat
Adorn our parks, as towards the paths of hush

And peace men gladly turn, the ruin black
Forgetting and its horror; then, anon,
Asleep beneath the mantled Union Jê .

A form is borne, the gunless wheel upon,
The flotsam of the hurricane and wrack;
Caps lift, the traffic pauses and swings on.

From My Gallery

APRES L'AMOUR

*Qu'y a-t-il? Oh! qu'y a-t-il
après l'amour? Jeanne Cuissinier*

Into the room the dusk had spread,
And with the dusk there came a friend,
Within whose eyes as dull as lead,
There work'd a pain, which had no end,
A cruel pain, which sent its sting
Into the heart of everything.

"O comrade, do not probe my wound!
The glory of the day is sped;
I dream'd a golden dream, and found,
On waking, that my joy was fled;
Rose leaves, a ring, alone remain
To add their smart to my fierce pain.

"My wit a cunning devil stole,
And then in naked truth's despite
A lying word leap'd from my soul;
It smote her rosy dimples white;
Dropp'd one by one these petals dead;
'There lies our love,' was all she said.

"O fellow of the vanish'd days.
O balanced soul! O happy heart!
O mender of life's broken ways!
What can remove the poison'd dart?
Is there no medicine or cure?
What can there be *après l'amour*?"

"I know," I said, "a granite wall,
A temple by the sleeping lake;
It speaks responsive to the call
Which sorely burden'd pilgrims make;
Approaches now the very hour,
When you may test its secret power.

"My boat lies ready on the beach,
The ripples rest beneath the moon;
Your heart's gate open to its speech,
You will receive its token soon;
But use no other call, be sure,
Than that one word, '*Après l'amour*'."

From My Gallery

The towering bastion crown'd with pine
Was silent in the moonlight clear;
It smiled at peace in its dream-shrine,
Waiting the lover's call to hear;
Deep, deep within its quiet breast
Reposed the answer to his quest.

Not once but twice he made assay,
And once and twice his spirit quailed;
His words strove thrice to make their way
And thrice again his courage failed;
Then in an accent weak and poor
He whisper'd forth, '*Après l'amour?*'

A silence reigned; then suddenly
He raised a clamour unafraid;
It shot across the windless sky,
And struck against the palisade;
Quick and sharp as thunder-crack
'*L'Amour*' the echo hurtled back.

'*L'Amour, l'amour*' the night invades;
The sounds across the waters swell;
'*L'Amour,*' the flower which never fades,
The sweetest, purest immortelle,
The priceless gem, the Koh-i-noor—
"*Après l'amour?*" "*L'Amour,*" "*l'amour!*"

SHAKESPEARE

The outward castle of the soul, its walls,
Its moat and fortalice with curious glance,
Its scarps and battlements the poet scans;
Anon at his behest the drawbridge falls,
And he is swept within its lofty halls,
A master of the revels, catch and dance;
By smoking cresset taken from its stance
Guided, with pity in his heart, he crawls

Down to the den, where evil things and dire
Are prison'd far beyond the light of noon;
Aloft, where martlets build in tower and spire,
And eagles soar, he mounts, companion boon
Of nimble air, storm-cloud and shooting fire,
Of misty purple hills and shining moon.

From My Gallery

A DAY

What is a day? All rosy from his tent
And eager for the gallant enterprise,
Brushing the slumber from his wide blue eyes,
With skin as soft as silk and roses blent,
Flashes Apollo, with no armament
Save for the golden arrow which swift flies
Athwart the hollow of the morning skies,
Gleaming afar on its high mission bent.

His blond curls wildy streaming, disarrayed,
A molten largess lavishly he pours
On earth and sea, on prince and beggar-maid,
Flinging amain the riches of his stores:
What time he finishes his escapade,
He trails his crimson flag to other shores.

THE WAY TO BATTERSEA

"Which is the way to Battersea?"
A stranger-voice called pleasantly,
From the bright ripples of the bay;
"Can you, perchance, direct my way?"

"Why, they who bend toward Battersea,
The village of the sunny lea,
The hamlet of the winding stream,
Follow along the golden gleam,
Faring yon granite isles between,
Whose ramparts are all draped in green;
The silver birch-tree, oak and elm
And whispering pine will man your helm,
The leaping fish your boat will guide,
And loons, far-diving on each side;
Sun-beams will dimple, and wave and bow,
And fleck with buttercups your prow;
And if your heart has been beguiled
By all the charms of the wonder-wild,
A mink may your companion be,
And pilot you to Battersea;
At every narrowing curve and bend
The rush and lily-pad will lend
Aid, and the stately reeds among
The Red-wing may uplift his song;

From My Gallery

So by these merry vandals led,
And so bedecked and garlanded,
Your golden caravel you moor
Amidst the willows by the shore,
There where the rill
Drops o'er the sill,
And turns the quaint old flour-mill.

That is the way to Battersea,
The sunlit track to Battersea,
The royal mile to Battersea,
And, stranger, by your winsome smile
Methinks you'll make the royal mile."

SHE DWELT AT KAKABEKA FALLS

She dwelt at Kakabeka Falls,
Just where the ancient green-capp'd hills
Cast up their rugged granite walls,
Through which the cream-brown river spills.

The wind played with her golden hair,
The sun was on her dark blue shawl,
Her form was lithe as salmon fair,
Her face we never saw at all.

She vanished down a narrow pass,
Which wound its way 'mongst spruces hoary,
And falls and trail and gold-hair'd lass
Are fragments of an unknown story.

LOBORO LAKE

O Loboro! O Loboro!
Thou breakest into countless smiles
By Inverary's sunny lea,
Or deck'st thy breast with gems of isles,
Amongst the bays of Battersea.

O Loboro! O Loboro!
Thy lovely waters are so kind,
I take you with me when I go,
Or else I leave my heart behind,
O Loboro!

From My Gallery

MARTIN AND ANNA

Bow'd o'er his parchment sat a pallid friar
In a wide-vaulted cell; his lined cheek
And temple veined were by a quiet taper
Lighted; his thin lips soundless moved; before
Him stood a crucifix, which his left hand
Lovingly touch'd. "If any person will
Come after me, let him deny himself,"
He wrote, "take up his cross and follow me";
Then spake, "Deny himself," to his own self
Say "no"; "lift up his cross,"—no crucifix,
But his own cross, God's charge, even as Jesus,
Bowing his head and shoulders, carried his,
Not in a convent cell, or in a cowl'd
Processsional, but on the rough, broad road,
Day after bitter day in the dust and heat,
Patient midst clamor of the crowd, on, up
To the bare hill. O great unshaken spirit!
O brother big of heart! O loving friar
Of every harrowed soul! O son of man!
Let virtue flow to me from Thy still form
Even as from Thee it passed a healing balm
Long since in Palestine?" Even so he spake,
Upon his arm deep bowing, while his pen
Slipp'd from his fingers, and all round was still.

Then through and through the vacant gloom,
And o'er and o'er and round and round,
There sank and rose a moan, a boom,
A hollow deep and eerie sound.

A sigh it seem'd, a moaning sigh;
The friar cross'd the bare stone floor,
Glanced out upon the darkening sky;
"The pines," he said, "are tossing sore,

The pallid moon their boughs illume."

A silence came. His fallen pen
He raised, his copying to resume;
The ghostly echo broke again,

And slowly crept about the cell,
Like a blind tiger in its lair,
Or muffled tongue of far-off bell,
Groping its way through foggy air.

From My Gallery

He bow'd himself upon his knees,
Then rose and opened the barr'd door.
"The winds are moving on the seas,
The waves are falling on the shore.

They seem like lost and anguished souls,
Upon a vain unending quest
For peace amongst the wild sea-shoals,
But peace they cannot find or rest."

With shaking hand he strove once more
The letters of the page to trace;
Words wildly swam his eyes before,
He shuddering fell upon his face,

And on the floor his meagre frame
Lay huddled, while his feeble breath
Seemed to escape and cease,—“The shame,”
He groaned, “is mine; then welcome death!”

Like mist upon the surface of a stream
Which almost moves not, but in silence takes
A shape, the darkness grew outlined, and showed
Itself a figure draped and hooded, who
The scarcely breathing friar, stooping, touch'd;
“Martin!” she said, “Martin! O Martin! I
Am here.” The accent seem'd to steal its way
To the seat of life, like spark of leaping fire
Along a powder'd fuse. Quickly he rose
Upon his knees, and looking up amazed
And awe-struck, cried “Anna, can it be you?”
“Yes, Martin,” she replied, “’Tis I,” the while
Her hand felt lovingly the shaven crown
And forehead of the kneeling monk; “O Anna,
Anna, my long-lost Anna! O, my love!
O, Anna, Anna love, my long-lost love!”

TRUE LOVE

True love it ever gives the best,
And ever is the best its quest;
True love is ever in unrest,
Unless the best is host and guest.

From My Gallery

A DERELICT

Afloat upon an unknown sea
One day a derelict was sighted,
We signal'd it quite jauntily:
"O whence and whither you benighted?"
We thought to greet it and pass by,
For how could such a hulk reply?

It was no beast, no mortal voice,
Made answer from the castaway;
A cadence rich and deep and choice
Re-echoed from its timbers gray;
From hollow chambers of the boat
Came words as from a human throat.

"'Tis true I am a castaway;
My sails, masts, cargo, seamen lost,
My tasks are o'er, and now to play;
The Summer sun and Winter frost
Make frolic on my batter'd deck,
Or pearl the cordage of my wreck.

The gulls their plumes of dazzling white
Around my crumpled cabin sweep,
Or safe upon the stanchions light;
The flying fishes boldly leap
At stem or stern, or swiftly glide
My unoffending bulk beside.

Birds, fishes, waters, winds and skies
Encircle my responsive soul,
And flinging high their draperies
Enact their frenzied carmognole,
While thunder-roar and lightning-glance
Add their wild quota to the dance.

Come, cut your cable! Set adrift
Your sampan on the pathless sea!
Yourself above your confines lift,
And promenade the wave with me!
Together far and wide we'll roam
O'er wind-blown wave-tossed ocean home."

From My Gallery

TO AND FRO

Adown the road to Inverary,
The birds on every fence and limb,
Uplift their music, liquid, fairy,
And sweetly chant their morning hymn,
Adown the road to Inverary.

Adown the road to Inverary
Along a narrow pathway glide
A maiden's footsteps, light and airy;
Poor Robin takes the other side,
Adown the road to Inverary.

Adown the road to Inverary
The dusty highway lies between;
She shoots a swift glance, coy and wary,
All by the stupid swain unseen,
Adown the road to Inverary.

Up the road from Inverary
The ardent sun is bending low,
Quite softly Robin steps and Mary,
While sleeps the bee in the Golden Glow,
Up the road from Inverary.

Up the road from Inverary
One narrow path's enough for two:
Of words they both are passing chary,
Strolling amidst the deepening blue,
Up the road from Inverary.

THE LAKE OF DREAMS

There's a lake of dreams in the moon, they say,
Where girls and boys, the mariners brave,
Man their vessels and sail away
Out on its golden silvery wave;
And I hope their haven is Rainbow Bay.

Hist! Where on earth are the lights and gleams?
The passage-way it is hard to find,
But he will discover it, me seems,
Who seeks it with all his strength and mind,
Spreading his sail on his Lake of Dreams.

From My Gallery

A PASSIONATE BIRD

She bathed in a pool in the wilderness,
And challenged the sun with her body bare;
With her back to a barren rock she stood,
In that yellow and windless solitude;
The demons she summoned of earth and air
To rise from their caverns of lawlessness,
From oak and ivy the poison to press
And smear the juice on her bosom fair.

Shaken with ardor, consumed with thirst,
A passionate bird to the wilderness came,
And drank of the drops on her rounded breast;
So swift was the venom in its arrest,
So quickly it ran like a crimson flame,
That body and soul asunder burst;
The bird was dead and the woman accursed,
And all her beauty went out in shame.

WHAT IS LOVE?

"What is Love?" do you say?
In your big arms to huddle,
Close to your strength to cuddle
For ever and a day.
But if wearied you fly away.

"What is Love?" Why so coy?
My form in your clutch and grasp,
Your neck in my tightest clasp,
So I thrill with joy.
But what if your passion cloy?

"What is Loving?" In awe
Low at your feet to kneel
Deep in my shrine the ideal,—
That is my law.
But what if you find a flaw?

LOVE

Two links of gold in silken band,
Two blossoms on one single plant,
Two lives shaped by a master-hand,
Two notes in one melodious chant,
Two moons around one single sun,
Two beings trembling into one.

From My Gallery

O, WHAT IS LOVE

O what is love? I do not know.
I place smooth stones within a sling:
'Tis still beyond my farthest throw.

I set an arrow trimm'd with wing,
And shoot it gleaming like a star:
Love lies beyond the stoutest string.

It is so near and yet so far;
'Tis hard to find the way to go
To where life's deepest secrets are:
O, what is Love, I do not know.

PROPHETS FALSE AND TRUE

Far off they stand on Jordan's bank
With wagging head and lips outthrust;
The spice and flavour of their rank
They relish with a proper gust.

They see, oh yes! they dream they see
What birth the future may unseal;
They whisper forth their prophecy
With solemn, sage and sapient zeal.

Whatever be their oracle,
The rustling leaf, the windy den,
The crust they see, the outer shell;
The truth is far beyond their ken.

* * * * *

"As the Lord liveth and thy soul
Liveth, I will not leave thee, no;
Whate'er thy goal it is my goal,
Let sun's ray smite or tempest blow!

"Let me in Israel's strait not fail;
With thy high courage me endow;
My father! my father! thee I hail,
The chariot and the horsemen, thou!

So spake Elisha, heart aflame;
So passed the land of Israel,
Escaping unbelief and shame,
From miracle to miracle.

From My Gallery

THE BELIEVER

He walks along the winding country ways,
And in the streets he saunters up and down,
He has a genial impulse at his heart,
And smiles at many things he sees and hears;
The gateways of his mind are opened wide,
And scraps are gather'd in from all the world.

Some dismal things go on in the big world;
Up hidden alleys and secluded ways
Are whisper'd plottings; on the causeway wide
The human tigers drag each other down;
The evil threatenings he overhears,
And takes them often to his pondering heart.

It has been said of old time that the heart
Is wicked desperately o'er all the world;
He doesn't quite believe all that he hears;
The innocence of children and their ways
Ring out a happy chorus far adown
The chambers of his being, standing wide

The grasses and the flowers growing wide,
Have untold glories knocking at his heart;
Within the bosom of the ocean down,
In quaint and dusty corners of the world,
Are jewels rare, while human words and ways
He watches ardently, attent he hears.

The unspoken mystic syllables he hears
Blowing around the unknown vast and wide,
Mixing their notes with all earth's daily ways,
And giving strength and being to man's heart;
Even the crimson horrors of the world
Add to this music, but away far down.

Too distant never, nor too deep adown
Is human misery, but that he hears
Its moaning, though the gay and busy world
Is bound on other traffic on the wide
Ocean. With bended head and stricken heart
He knows his own fond sin, and goes his ways.

The word deep down, along its sounding ways,
In patient faring wide, he listening hears,
And then his burden'd heart he tells the world.

From My Gallery

QUESTION AND ANSWER

How long, Lord, how long?
When can our wounds heal?
Where is the arm strong?
Where is the world-weal?

Is not the face wan?
Is not the hope dead?
Has not the lamb gone?
Come is the wolf's-head?

Cold breaks the gray light,
Sharp frost is master,
Sick grows the daylight,
Prowls grim disaster.

Must then the heart break?
To Moloch kneel . . ?
Naught but the mill-rake?
Cain's mark on man's brow?

Answer

"Four score your days, say;
Brief flick of My time;
Long is the world's way
Up out of black slime;

Mine, Mine the broad back,
World's burden I bear,
Sleep not on soul's track,
Enter with your share."

A SILHOUETTE

I fain would keep this silhouette
With which no brilliant gem can vie;
'Tis true I cannot see your eye,
Hidden behind a mask of jet,
But I can see your coronet
Of hair, and lips of coquetry;
I fain would keep this silhouette,
With which no brilliant gem can vie.
I'll store it away in a cabinet,
Closed in a casket of ivory,
And no marauder will it espy:
Be it e'en a breach of etiquette,
I fain would keep this silhouette.

From My Gallery

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

O yes, in Holy Scripture it is writ
That he will be defiled who touches pitch;
And yet I have an irritating itch
To put a question with regard to it;
I am confused; enlighten me a bit,
And tell me on your honor which is which;
Does he who tumbles in a muddy ditch
Defile himself? Or he who, not a whit
Concerned about the poor unfortunate
Who calls for help, stands on the edge with nails
Powder'd, boots polished, clothes immaculate,
And hesitates and turns away and fails?
Whose fingers are defiled? Each candidate
We'll scrupulously weigh; bring out the scales!

THE BEE

A bee, a bee, a working bee,
Amidst the blossoms rover,
Or buzzing o'er the sunny lea
And sipping at the clover;
A bee, a honey-bee am I,
And busily my office ply.
To every flower-cup I bring
A store of dusty pollen,
Which has besprinkled leg or wing,
Or on my eyebrows fallen;
A welcome merchantman am I,
Since 'tis my trade to sell and buy.
King Midas in the days of old,
So runs the Grecian story,
Turned everything he touched to gold,
Yet gat him little glory;
But 'tis my pride that men and bears
Thrive well upon my golden wares.
With here a lip, and there a lip,
Midst pink and white and flaxen,
We gather honey every trip
Upstored in chamber waxen,
Fine provender for darken'd hours,
When gone are all the Summer flowers.

From My Gallery

And when Jack Frost begins to bite,
We close our tired peepers,
And doze all through the Winter-night
One of the seven sleepers,
Ready to leave our narrow cell,
What time Sol rings his rising bell.

THE BOOMERANG

Methinketh ~~me~~ from hunter flung,
A boomerang, a wooden thing,
Soaring the butterflies among
And birds of song on color'd wing—
Flit t' ey and dart, each other chase
From tree and flower to flower and tree,
Hearkening in their merry race
To naught but their own minstrelsy—
But wheresoever I may play,
Launched through the air on mission fleet,
I know the limit of my way,
And curve back to the master's feet.
From him I am, to him I go,
Whatever be the hunter's game;
It is decreed and written so;
I turn to him from whence I came.

THE FORTUNATE ISLES

There are no Fortunate Isles; it is a fable;
A puny legend that in far-off days
God walked with man along the garden ways,
Or spake with him, or sat at the same table;
It is a myth that any God is able
To make a thing, or change himself to man,
And life's a day and night, a feeble span,
And all the earth a foul Augean stable.
Never! Never! for all who are not slaves
Of their own selves, this tuft of grasses dry
Is splendor infinite, these muddy waves
Pactolus; each new day a clarion-cry
And miracle; himself, who gives, he saves;
God is a lover and truth poetry.

From My Gallery

A QUIET LIFE

Saw the willows
 Don their smocks;
Heard the billows
 Smite the rocks;

Knew the Hammer
 Tinkering;
Breathed the glamour
 Sweet of Spring;

Grasped the icy
 Winter's hand;
Felt the spicy
 Zephyr bland;

Called earth we know
 Holy ground;
Each bambino
 Nimbus-crowned.

Said wiseacres
 "Geck!" and "Gull!"
Said mudrakers
 "Timid, dull!"

Night is certain
 On to creep;
Draw the curtain;
 He's asleep.

Keen-eyed watcher
 From afar,
Who's no botcher,
 Sees a star.

STORM AT NIGHT

Driven terrified away
 Is sleep from all our pillows;
The rooted oak-trees bend and sway
 Toss, too, the slender willows;
Stamp, and champ in rampant play
 The herds of white-wa:ed billows:
The fierce wind shrieks in frenzied key,
As 'twere a tortured chained banshee,
Or frantic wild valkyrie.

From My Gallery

A SECRET

If you question me to say
Who it is I love,
I tell not for an empire's sway,
Nor for heaven above.

Yes, her lovely hair is brown,
Hazel are her eyes,
And her smile, her pretty frown,
Sweet beyond surmise.

And when she bids me undertake
Some absurdest thing,
I just for her dear winsome sake
Bend to her bidding.

As dog or faithful slave I crouch
Lowly at her feet;
Her sharpest censure, I avouch,
Is so bitter-sweet.

If you question me to say
Who it is I love,
I tell not for an empire's sway
Nor for heaven above.

TO BURNS

O haunter of the hills and banks and braes,
Friend of the friend-bereft and friend-forsaken,
O harp by tender fingers thrill'd and taken,
O champion of liberty, ablaze
With love of unsophisticated ways
And creatures vagabond; with fierce scorn
shaken;
The tunes which nightingales and larks awaken
Not sweeter are than thine immortal lays.
Pangs sharp and unavailing seize me yet,
To watch thee bar thy heart against assault,
Or shrink a wounded thing into the vault
And dumb, t'escape the cruel tempter's net.
What venom'd sorrow touch'd thee, poet strong,
O standard-bearer of the sons of song?

From My Gallery

YESTERDAY

A sky-blue dome,
A tumbling stream,
A sparkling gleam,
Some floating foam.

Loose and astray
Amidst the trees,
Saunter'd the breeze
That far-off day.

O the roundelay,
The dim expanse,
And the opiate trance
That were yesterday!

A stricken prey
I am to fears;
'Tis years and years
Since yesterday.

Yet the bubbles play
The bird's on the wing
And the rapids sing
As yesterday.

DESOLATE

Like lonely sparrow on a leafless bough,
I sit before the dying glow and stare,
And ask me what she may be doing now.

Though darkness is about me everywhere,
The sun is shining in bright robes arrayed
On other regions which she makes more fair.

I dream that she along that pathway strayed,
And here she stood beside the apple-tree,
While sunbeams in her golden tresses played,

And tantalizingly she laughed at me.
The glow has vanished, and with wrinkled brow
I ponder on the empty days to be,
Like lonely sparrow on a leafless bough.

From My Gallery

THE OPEN DOOR

When the sun sinks low,
When the sun sinks low,
 'This then I sail away
In roomy flat bateau,
 Beyond the silent bay,
When the sun sinks low.

Once a dream-led bird,
Once a dream-led bird,
 In spaces of the dark,
To song was inly stirr'd;
 Forth fares my quiet barque
Like that song of bird.

O the black wave draws!
O the black wave draws!
 And there's no bight nor lee
Nor any land, because
 Our haven is the sea:
O the black wave draws!

GERTRUDE

What, Gertrude is this? And why so pale?
Why do you shudder? Why do you quail?

O, I was charmed with my lily white;
I wore it, mother, day and night.

What has befallen your maiden flower?
Has anything happ'd that priceless dower?

O, mother dear, he told of the war,
And wore on his tunic a ribbon and star.

But, Gertrude dear, when done is the battle,
A soldier wounds not with his coat and his prattle.

O, he was handsome and he was gay,
And, mother, I threw my lily away.

Woe and more woe! O bitter the pain!
What water will cleanse the sorrow and stain?

O mother dear, your face do not hide;
This dagger red I have thrust in my side.

From My Gallery

EXPECTATION

Brush my eyes lightly as they close,
With the leaves of a crimson rose;

Touch your two warm lips to mine,
That I may tremble as with wine;

Let full clusters of lilac bloom
Fill my nostrils with sweet perfume;

Cradle me, mother, in your arms
Abate the surge of my alarms;

Let sun and moon and planets stream
In time to the music of my dream.

Breathe o'er my limbs the zephyr of Spring,
As I wait the coming of my King.

THE CANADIAN POET

Believer in the sky warm-brooding over
The steaming earth; in air and snow-clad peak,
Pearled by the evening sun; in barrens bleak;
In smell of pine and marsh, buckwheat and clover;
In blustering wind, the vagrant sheep-cloud-drover;
Familiar of the boom of hawk, the shriek
Of heron, chant of whip-poor-will; by creek
And lake and shore and falling waters rover.

You thread the wooded wilderness afar,
Or skim the river in birch-bark canoe,
Or scan the nest aloft on fronded spar;
Tracking the wild with moccasin and shoe,
You light your camp-fire 'neath the Northern Star;
O strong believer, I believe in you!

FORGIVENESS

"How oft shall I forgive my brother's crime
Against me, Rabbi? When account may I
As measure full his cup of clemency?
Clamors and calls aloud in every clime
The tongue of nature, when her ways sublime
Are trampled on or scouted. Tell me why
Should brother's scorn and outrage be passed by?
How oft must I forgive? A seventh time?"

From My Gallery

"Seventy times seven. By your brother's deed
You are not hurt. For him the open door
That leads to life, Simon, keep you with heed;
The wandering lamb upon the trackless moor
The shepherd seeks unflagging. Be your creed
Love, ample, oceanic, without shore."

YOU

Your word!

I caged it as it soared with wings
Within my heart, as 'twere a bird,
And there it sings,
Your wingèd word.

Your glance!

It hurtled, as it were a dart,
A spear, a shaft, a polish'd lance,
And pierced my heart,
Your murder-glance.

The song the wingèd word has croon'd
Do not remove;
Draw not the arrow from its wound;
The pain I love.

CHILDREN

Let us be children always; their round eyes
Look on the world as if the clock of time
Had just begun to sound its matin chime,
And the unsullied bloom of Paradise
Yet lay on meadow-grass and daily skies;
The sun and moon and all the crew sublime
Of stars, each region, race and clime
Are at the door; gnomes, elves and fairies

In every crack and cranny lurk and creep
And beckon; blow their bugles and beat drums,
In all the winds; from every flower peep;
And silly giants with their fe-faw-fums
Are trapp'd like rats in their own donjon-keep;
Let us be children till the silence comes.

From My Gallery

COME!

Ears beating loudly like a drum

A glance like fire-fly;

"Had I invited you to come?"

"I would have come," said I.

Shooting through finger-tip and thumb

Electricity:

"If now I beg of you to come?"

"Why come I will," said I.

Lips dumb;

Heart's cry:

"Come!"

"Ay!"

PAULINE JOHNSON

Brilliant against brown grass and russet briar,

Among the gnarled granite rocks, between

The sombre-coated trees of evergreen,

Flashes the dauntless salvia, like fire,

Her wayside crimson gay and bold attire,

A village gipsy or an Autumn queen:

Such, too, art thou, O dusky, wild Pauline,

Touching with ardent fingers thy sweet lyre.

Or art thou something still more wild and shy,

An eagle nesting on a mountain ledge,

The duck-hawk wheeling in the northern sky,

The silent otter in a lonely sedge?

Or art a passionate defiant cry,

Beating the dome at purple sunset edge?

WHAT HAPPENED?

"What happen'd him? His springtime bud and blow

What sudden frost has nipp'd? And what is left

Of all his golden promise? Bare and reft

He moves unnoticed in the ebb and flow

Of the common crowd." Good friend, who question so,

The belt of iron which with mighty heft

The doughty blacksmith, sinewy and deft,

Smote, scattering swift sparks aglow

From My Gallery

Dazzling, now rings an axle in his tub,
Or rims a wooden wheel or whipple-tree;
Or firmly clasps a tongue or wagon-hub;
Safe travelling it makes for you and me,
Bumping through forest proud or patient scrub,
And o'er the corduroy of life: so he.

MILTON

A little child sat musing on the shore,
Where wind-blown ripples ran along the strand,
And airs from Araby or Maracand
Spice-laden, sporting with his golden store
Of curls, into his ear their gather'd lore
Whispered with strange allurements. From his
hand
Slipp'd silently the beads of golden sand,
While sparkling elfins tripp'd the wide sea-floor.

Boomed suddenly the parapet of heaven;
Fell torrid and Antarctic blasts allied,
Cradled in caves with screaming voices seven
Smote the white sea. The child had drawn aside.
Confronted undismayed the molten levin
One gray-haired man with smile of quiet pride.

LIFE

It is not drab. No! No! it is not drab!
It cannot be that life with all its gold
And promises, should be a story told,
A dwindling theme and echo; that Queen Mab
And Puck, hob-goblin, minaret, mihrab,
Should cease, and we thin, shivering with cold
And disillusioned, should our tatters fold
About us, waiting the envenom'd stab.

No! No! Niagara yet sweeps and pours
Through all our arteries; the coracle
Puts from the shore; their vast resounding doors
The mosque and temple open wide; and still
The roving sea-dogs haunt the far Azores,
And mighty Nimrod roams on Shinar Hill.

From My Gallery

TO SHAKESPEARE

To the mind's eye appears a cavalcade,
The king, in brave caparison, the earl,
The fop, the elf, the soldier, fool and churl,
The wife, the queen, the shepherdess, the maid,
And she who wears her virgin garment frayed
And torn, spirits ascending from the deep
At thy sole ordering, to laugh and weep
To live and die, but never more to fade:

Immortal shadows! How their actions flow
About us! How their words, forms, gestures glide
Into the marrow of our being, till we know
Them as few living men we know! They bide,
While human vessels rise and pass and go,
Anchor'd beyond the reach of moon and tide.

INQUISITIVE

Inquisitive above the hill
The sun with joyous ardor peeps,
His lively eyeballs feast their fill
On the lake's beauty, as she sleeps.

Encircled by vast miles of green
She bares her bosom to the sky,
Whose placid and enchanting sheen
Is fair intoxicatingly.

"O virgin loveliness! O maid!"
Calls out aloud the mounting Jove,
"Forsake thy calm and emerald shade,
And give the day to me and love!"

MY DREAM

My dream it glides over the forest and hill,
Where no human foot steps it wanders at will,
High o'er the plateau and above the Karoo
It travels unbridled like wild loup garou.

Like honey-bee robbing the sweet purple clover
My dream, booty-laden, returns to its cover;
Come, see how the walls of my wigwam I grace
With all the world's wonders, the sports of the chase.

From My Gallery

THE JUDGE

No, not because I from some moral height
Witness the sordidness and crime of men,
Surrounded by a wall which from the fen
Of noisome foulness and the stroke of blight
Protects me, do I exercise the right
Of granting cautious pardon; nay, but when
I feel my way through jungle to the den
Where feeble, dim and unsnuff'd candle light
Reveals a hope defeated but not dead,
A faith in some poor hazard, a last throw,
A straw clutch'd in the hand, a broken thread,
A simple toy of childhood, treasured so,
Some smile or word not wholly crush'd or fled—
O God forgive me, then I see and know.

BRITOMART

I heard a tip-toe on the stair;
It was the step of Britomart;
Though there was Winter in her hair,
There was no Winter in her heart.
She sang "Upon life's checker'd way
What's this which I have found?
Why 'O it's love, it's love, they say,
Which makes the world go round.'"
As though she wished the world to share,
She sang and sang the simple part,
For be there snow upon her hair,
There bubbled Spring within her heart.



